

Surprise! It's the KeyClucks! I just erased the first paragraph which said it's October of 1996 (that was when I started this), and updated some of the info I had entered way back then, and added some new stuff, and if we're lucky this will make it to you in early summer '98.

First, business. The nest egg still runneth over, so please give your money to a worthy cause other than CFO this year. BUT, there's one problem with that; when you don't send dues, most of you don't send news either. So keep the money, but send the skinny; I need something for the '99 issue (if this doesn't turn out to be it).

There have been a few of our number vain enough to utilize the vanity call sign system. (Ye editor is also vain, but too lazy to bother.) One of these is the former W4BQF, now W4CC. Let's see, Whiskey Four Chicken Coop? Sure a good call for a CFOer. 'Course it could be Crazy Chester just as easily! I hesitate to tell the reader what W4LDF thinks it stands for; well, ok, all the news that's fit to print and more: Ed says it's Whiskey Four Chicken Crap. This issue is going to get better. Really. [Ed. note: Since I wrote that, good ol' Tom went back to W4BQF. Maybe he couldn't stand the teasing??? Also, as noted below, W4LDF became a silent key.]

One of our new members is Jack, W4RGX. The nomination from W4LDF read this way: "This is to place the name of fellow amateur W4RGX in full nomination as a member in poor standing in the Chicken Fat Operators. Said nominated person has demonstrated his ability to send and receive the radio morse code in such a manner that communications can be accomplished by the simple use of a series of long and shorted bursts of radio energy. The series of long and short energy bursts used by the nominee are the same as used by other radio amateurs, therefore said nominee qualifies as a person capable of communicating with other Chicken Fat operators. The above nominated person should therefore be entered into the membership book, assigned a number in poor standing, and receive all the non-benefits like the rest of us." Wow, how could such a request be denied. And the nomination was seconded by W4CC (see above), but that Ed's comments were not newsworthy. I guess being nominated by two different "Ed's" can't hurt; after all, we all know two Eds are better than one. Welcome, Jack.

Incidentally, I have a note in my files (from a QSO with Jack) that he was a bike messenger in his younger days. Wonder how long ago that was? I heard from N9EJS that Jack turned 89 recently.

Heard there was a big wreck around here. Seems a police van collided with a cement truck. Now they're searching for five hardened criminals.

As near as I can tell, the SSB net on Saturday mornings is all but dead. Just can't seem to keep that going without ol' pushbutton. As most of you know, Frank KB0PB had a stroke in '96 and passed away in July '97. Frank had a long and illustrious career as a ham and CFO member, and we're gonna' miss him.

Kris K9AMC also had a stroke in 1996. We hear he's doing pretty well. From what I've heard, Kris is pretty active on SSB, but he hasn't been on cw much lately. I did have a SSB QSO with Kris during December of '97, and he sounded pretty good. I've also heard him a couple time on cw, but that's been rare. I wonder how he does these days on his QLF key.

Thanks to Dale NU4O for taking on the NCS job on the bug net for most of the summer of '96. Somehow during the summer of '97, both the bug net and the QSO net seemed to slip into the band cracks. Perhaps when the sunspots begin to cooperate a bit more, we can get those two nets back in business again. I sure miss the music of those tune-ups! A lot of CFO ops have been heard on the Queen Bee Net (QBN), including N5IU, W4RGX, W0BMU, W5UFT, W9NN, W5APX, N9EJS, W4CU, W9BRD, W8KJP, WA4LJJ, and of course the Queen Bee herself, AB5TY. Lea made an effort to get the bug net under way again a few months back, and it was at least temporarily successful. Then Bob, N4WCO, took over as NCS for awhile, but it appears the bug net has been pretty inactive the past few weeks. Maybe as the sunspots increase . . . . And speaking of N4WCO, a few months ago he heard a guy with the call N4AKE on the local repeater. When he found out this guy was from Aurora, IL, he asked if he happened to know WB9LTN. And that's how one of my buddies from up here met one of my buddies from down there. And N9AKE (now N4SI) has just retired from Air Traffic Control and will be moving down to Bob (N4WCO's) area once he sells his house here. That, by the way, could be a challenge. I don't think any non-ham would buy his house until he takes

down the humungous antenna tower, and I doubt he'll do that before the house is sold. He may have to find a ham buyer (any takers??? We could use some good cw ops in Aurora! And we have a pretty ham-friendly tower ordinance here too!).

I'll be in Hawaii during July, but when I return in August, if no one else has stepped forward, I'll call CQ for the bug net. So look for the bug net around 7033 at 24Z on Tuesday evenings beginning August 4. I won't be able to run it on the second Tuesday of each month due to the local club meeting that night, but other than that, I should be pretty regular, at least 'til January.

Now here's one for CFO for sure. An executive of Tyson Chicken Company went to see the Pope. He tells the Pope that Tyson Chicken Company will donate \$500,000,000 to the church if they will just change the Lord's prayer to read, "Give us this day our daily chicken." The Pope says, "My son, I can't change the word of the Lord." A week later the executive is back and says his Board of Directors has authorized a donation of \$1 billion if the church will change the Lord's prayer to read, "Give us this day our daily chicken." The Pope says, "My son, I can't change the word of the Lord." Two weeks later the executive returns once more and says his Board has authorized a donation of \$5 billion if the church will change the Lord's prayer to read, "Give us this day our daily chicken." The Pope says, "Let me call the College of Cardinals together. So the Pope meets with the College of Cardinals and says, "I have some good news and some bad news. The good news is that the church is about to receive \$5 billion. The bad news is that we're losing the WonderBread account. [I hope I beat Reader's Digest on that one - it's sure to be in there soon.]

Some of you may have seen Aurora, IL, on the news the summer of '96. On July 17, we had 17 inches of rain in a 24 hour period. That was a record for a non-tropical storm. The "morning after" was interesting - it was impossible to get around town. There was three feet of water in roads that I always thought were flat, but which have just slight depressions here and there which filled up. One family which lost their entire house also had a daughter and grandchild killed on TWA flight 800 the same night. My wife and I just lost a family room carpet in the two inches of water that we had; we were very lucky. Many, many houses had several feet of sewer backup (ours was just leakage through the window wells), quite a few had water up to the first floor ceiling, and some lost their foundations. We were supposed to leave the morning of July 18 for a month in Hawaii, but delayed one day. As I said, we were lucky. Clean-up and repair is pretty much complete now. Incidentally, I heard rumors that only a couple dozen homes in this area had flood insurance, so the financial burdens have been considerable.

I've heard that Del, W8KJP is back in the states after quite a stay in Korea. I'm not sure if this time it's permanent or not.

I have a note sitting here that says N4WCO had quintuple bypass a while back, but I didn't date it, and I'm not even going to guess just when that was. Sometime since the last KeyClucks.

Beside KB0PB, the other silent keys I know of are W4LDF, W1LZL, W6WQV, W5GRJ, W6SE, N2CMP, W3UW, N4IBF, W6UOT, W5AMK, KA9DYS, and W8FEC. We're going to miss all these cohorts. W4LDF was a regular on the nets and had a great sense of humor as evidenced by a couple of things mentioned above in this newsletter. W5GRJ was a good friend of AB5TY.

One of my projects this past year has been working on a World Wide Web home page. The URL (for you netizens) for my homepage is <http://www.aurora.edu/~bdillon> and I have some photos of some of our CFO OFCs at <http://www.aurora.edu/~bdillon/cfo.html>. It wouldn't be a surprise to see a photo of someone living in Texas named Tex wearing a ten-gallon hat, now would it? Well, the cfo page has all three of those items, but on three different people. Check it out if you have web access. And send me a photo for the gallery!

A supply preacher filled in for a sick colleague at a church he had never been to before. After the service, he was greeting parishioners, and one fellow shook his hand and said, "That was the worst sermon I ever heard," and walked on. The preacher continued to shake hands, and pretty soon the same parishioner came through the line a second time, shook the preacher's hand and said, "I hope I never hear a sermon that bad again," and walked on. The preacher was getting a bit disturbed, but continued shaking hands. Soon the parishioner came through the line a third time, shook the

preacher's hand and said, "That's got to be the most awful sermon ever preached," and walked on. The preacher looked inquisitively at the deacon standing next to him, and the deacon said, "Oh, Reverend, I should have warned you about that guy. Don't pay any attention to him, he's retarded. He has no idea what he's saying, he's never had an original thought in his life. In fact all he ever does is just repeat what he hears everyone else say." [Boy, I'm not going to ask for feedback on this Key Clucks!]

Jim ND0F writes that he hasn't been on the air much since a lightning strike in May of 1995. Jim didn't say if the rig damaged the rig or him, but any ham who lets lightning keep him off the air that long . . . . Jim says the neighbor lady is happier now that he isn't lighting up her TV and stereo. Reminds me of my old buddy K9AN whose neighbor lady was sure it was somehow the fault of his radio that her cake fell. At least she didn't sue.

Gary ZL1AN was in Ann Arbor in December '97 and spent a great evening with Jess W8MCP. Gary told me how to figure the time difference between here and there; I'm still puzzling over that one. One of us is confused, and I bet it's me.

Bill KB9XE and Ira NU2C were at Tom (W4BQF's) place in September of '97. After drooling all over Tom's gear, especially the Dvorak keyboard, all three attended the Gaithersburg hamfest. I think at least Bill also visited the Smithsonian, because I think there's a shot of Bill there on the webpage. Let's see, I think I know how to switch this keyboard to the Dvorak pattern: Weoisanoeinr oiweuroie f oeyurioehnf oerend. No, I guess not.

N8LAG, ex KD4HWN, is now in Montana. Brian Tew, let's see, wasn't there someone on the Loveboat show named Tew?

Remember Irv's Christmas from the 1995 KeyClucks? That was published by WorldRadio in December of 1996. A fine effort by Ray W0GHX.

Speaking of Christmas, I heard about two young sisters that both had parts in the church Christmas pageant. They got into an argument about which had the harder part, and one finally said in desperation, "Well, you just go ask Mommy. It is too much harder to be a virgin than an angel."

I mentioned the Queen Bee AB5TY earlier. She is a new CFO member since the last issue of the Clucks. Lea started pounding brass for the Santa Fe RR in 1944 at the age of 17. (Don't worry Lea, none of us CFOers are smart enough to figure out your age from that.) As Lea puts it, "The men were being drafted and they needed someone to do a man's work. They sent a woman (who else?)." Lea stuck it out at the RR for a couple years, then got married, had a son, worked for KFJZ-TV (for ten years), and later was a freelance court reporter in Dallas for 25 years (too bad - she retired before the OJ trial). Lea's OM is John KC5GLU. Lea got her ham ticket in 1993. In her own words, "Being on the radio for me is like Christmas every day, so everything else has been put on the back burner; I try to wash dishes every Thursday." Now that's the true CFO spirit for sure. Welcome Lea.

True story, I swear. My XYL does not take kindly to hearing me call her "the wife" on the air. She says she is "my wife", not "the wife." One day when she got home as I was ended a QSO, I told her the ham I had been working had referred to his own XYL as "my wife." My XYL started to smile, and then I finished it: "He called her 'my wife what's-her-name.'" That ham, by the way, was a CFOer, N9HI I believe.

W6NKE writes that he sure would like some help from CD Builders, Inc., mentioned in the '95 Clucks. Ken uses invisible wire due to antenna restrictions, and although he can work the world on 10, 15, and 20, his sig is marginal on 40 and 80. He says he can hear the CFO bunch around 7030, but they aren't usually able to hear him. I think Ken deserves an award for listening to a bunch of chickens he can't usually work!

Had an eyeball with Frank AC9T during the summer of '97. Interesting story here, I think. My wife (note I did not say "the wife") and I were having dinner at our house with a family named the Solomons (friends from church) one night in the spring of '97 when the phone rang. It was Frank; I believe this was the second time I had talked to Frank on the phone (in several years), and during the course of the conversation, he said, "I know Aurora is a big place [Ed. note: It is - population 100,000], but I



George N9EJS



Jim ND0F



Ray W4GOG



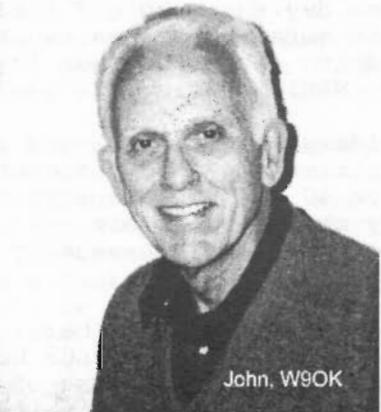
Wiley N5IU



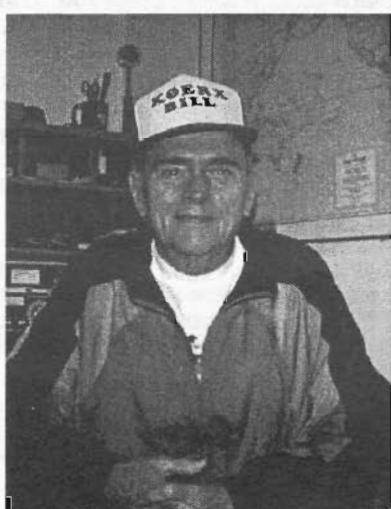
Jack W4RGX



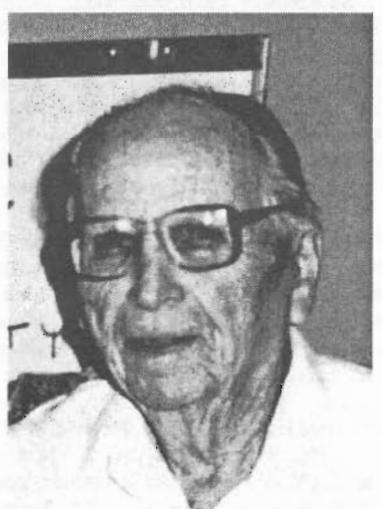
Irv W7GX



John W9OK



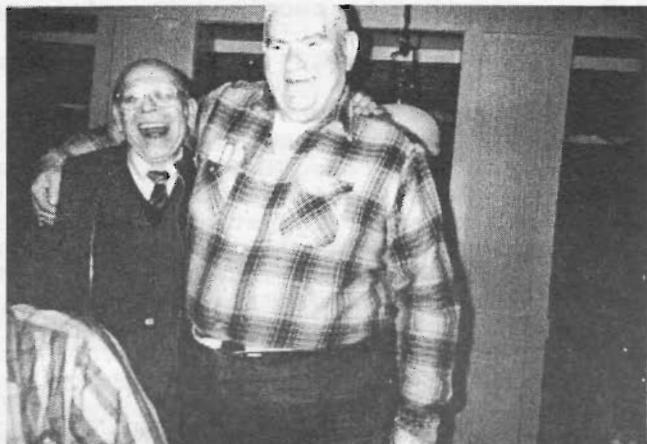
Bill K0ERX



Bob W9NN



Lea AB5TY at the Smithsonian



Kris K9AMC and Kirby WS9D



Bill KB9XE



Gary ZL1AN and Jess W8MCP



Steve K4CJX



Tex W0BMU



John W4CU

just have to ask: you don't by any chance know the Solomon family, do you?" After I put my teeth back in my mouth, I replied, "Well, they're sitting at our dinner table right now." After Frank put his teeth back in his mouth, we both had a good laugh. Turns out that Frank and the Solomons are related somehow. Later in the summer the eyeball was at a wedding reception for Solomon's daughter.

N9EJS reports that he received the ultimate insult when a picture of his shack was featured in a local club's newsletter with a caption that George belongs to the "Chicken Feed Operators." Well, retirement salary may qualify . . .

Dave W8OV teaches physics at the Hockaday School in Dallas. The school admits only girls (Dave didn't say whether that makes his job easier or harder than a coed school). Mike was recruited to Hockaday in 1987 from Ohio, the buckeye state. According to Dave, botanists describe the buckeye as a bald nut, which is not quite true since Dave has a few strands of hair remaining. At one parents' night, Dave was explaining that the lab was not up to par due to budget restraints. One of the parents approached Dave later and said, "What would it take to get the lab up to what you expect?" Dave said, "I'm taking inventory now, but after that I could give you an estimate." The man said, "You do that.", and Dave replied, "I will Mr. Perot." Dave also reports, "Currently we have a small radio club. The girls are pretty busy with a demanding schedule in and out of school, so its been hard getting many licensed, although over the last 10 years there have been about 30. Recently the girls have been building Ten-Tec T-kit regenerative short wave receivers, so at least they learn how to solder (and occasionally trouble-shoot.) The Hockaday Amateur Radio Klub, HARK, is KC5OLN."

Dave also included some information on one of our silent keys: "Occasionally discouraged by the few girls becoming licensed, I was encouraged over the years through my daily mobile CW schedule with Art Schermerhorn, W8FEC, as I drove the 10 miles to school. As both Art's health and equipment failed him in fall of 1996, I also went QRT for about a year. Art became a Silent Key in March of 1997 after a life of ham radio, several regular skeds, and active participation in local amateur radio clubs. In the last few years of his life Art was busy establishing a radio club and ARES in his county where there was neither, and in building a database of historical records for his church. He was a particular inspiration to me as he was a staunch supporter of my school activities in Ohio and at Hockaday, including school amateur radio contacts with an orbiting Shuttle from both states. This year I've renewed my mobile CW activity on the drives to and from school. Art would have liked that." And I think he would also have liked the tribute you wrote, Dave. Thanks.

I received an e-mail from WB9IHH in January with an update of his recent history. Jim was one of my early contacts when I got my ticket in 1973. He seemed to run every Midwest traffic net on the bands (I think my first contact with him was with him as NCS on a Michigan net although we both lived in Indiana). He was a young feller at the time, but has long since growed up! We had an eyeball in Huntington, Indiana, in the mid 70s, and after that Jim moved east to work at ARRL HQ. In 1990, Jim moved to NJ and went to work as a ship to shore cw op for Tuckerton Radio (WSC).

Lately Jim has been wearing two hats as a maritime satellite distress communications instructor at the U. S. Merchant Marine Academy on Long Island, and as a computer system installation engineer aboard naval vessels for a private company.

Those who forget the pasta are doomed to reheat it. Huh? Well, it's from the same source as this one: C:\WINDOWS C:\WINDOWS\RUN C:\SYSTEM\CRAWL. OK, one more: Boycott shampoo, demand real poo.

WF3T reports he has been putting up antennas at his new 12 acre QTH (ok, everybody turn green at once). He currently has 3 stacked KT34XA's, 2 stacked Cushcraft 40's, and various wires (ok, even greener). Now that you've got all that up Steve, how about getting on the air??? Steve (WF3T) also reports studying for his Novice ticket in '78, then abandoning the idea due to a career change until '89. Steve took to CW like a duck to water (or maybe like a rooster to a hen). He drives a semi and runs mobile cw [is that a keyer in semi-automatic mode?]. Steve's other hobbies are motorcycles and computer programming.

I don't think I mentioned in the '95 Clucks that K1KY's harmonic Katy is KC5JXE. Does she share the rig Tom?

W8LNJ reports that Apple is working on a computer small enough to be carried in a fanny pack; it will be called a Macintosh.

N7ASZ reports being QRL building a drag race car. Seems our members just can't get enough of QRQ, but what's the abbreviation for this mode? QRQ QRC? (Race Car for those a bit slow on the uptake!)

Larry VA3LK is building a new house on an island somewhere in the Ottawa area. Last winter, Larry went for an unexpected swim while hauling a trailer load of plywood to the island. The ice broke, and the tractor, trailer, and Larry all fell into the lake. Larry got out with the help of some of the plywood, but had to wait 'til the spring thaw to fish out his tractor. Since then I understand Larry has been shopping for a lighter tractor. Maybe SlimFast could help too, Larry.

W9SN (ex NW9G) is attempting to add to the CFO ranks by letting Brooke Lynn (born 1/11/98) listen to him send cw. Steve is 34, and he's been a cw op for over 19 years. Steve doesn't spend all his time on the radio - he has four children. Steve recently bought a 100 foot tower to help fill up his five acre estate. Is it just guys named "Steve" that have big estates and big towers? (See item earlier about WF3T if that one passed you by.)

As I mentioned earlier, we've had a lot of members vain enough to switch to a new vanity call. (Me, I'm too broke). Here's the list as I have it, in the format (Old -- New): (NR9J -- W9OK), (WA9LGC -- W9BV), (AK9O -- N9PR), (WA2CVV -- W2CVV), (AB7CH -- W6CTL), (WA3TOF -- W02P), (K5HIB -- W9LRV), (WB5TKC -- W5EV), (N6BJG -- W6LYS), (WA8CDM -- W8CDM), (KG8F -- K8DK), (WB8PAV -- W3LT), (WB8WTS -- W8WTS), (WA8ZKX -- K6KX), (K4CPB -- W5GOG), (K4HDV -- W0ABO), (KJ4KB -- N1KB), (N4LET -- K4EDX), (N4VM -- K4VM), (AD4ZA -- N5IU), (WB4ZSA -- K1KY), (KA1PKG -- W1HQW), (WB0HBS -- N0NR), (W0RAN -- W0HI), (K0OX -- W0DT), (NW9G -- W9SN). I think all the new calls are on the new roster.

I'd like to thank WW6C, W7WE, W4BQF, N9EJS, AB5TY, VA3LK, W8TM, and K1KY for their help in tracking down callsign changes by checking the Internet callsign database. That was a BIG help!!

Saw in article in the newsletter of the Queen Bee Net that indicates W0BMU is 87 years old and has been a ham for 74 years! Tex got his present call in 1926 and it was signed by Herbert Hoover. The article tells about Tex's great idea of one of the early battery eliminators. Seems the battery on his spark set didn't last long, so Tex hooked up an 8 volt doorbell transformer and ran the set from the 110V line. That quickly welded the key contacts and the set caught fire. After his Dad helped him put out the fire, his Dad also found a good use for a razor strap on some part of Tex's anatomy. And yet after all that, Tex is still a ham, and spent his life in radio! Either he has a tough behind or just doesn't know when to quit! We're glad you're still making us laugh Tex!

I hear that anemic guys are being warned not to take their iron pill and Viagra at the same time. Some who did just wound up pointing north all night. . . .

New calls since the last newsletter are: W9SN, AB5TY, N8LAG, NU4O, W4RGX, N4PF, WD8LDY, N9GG, WD8JYH, NN9V, and K0UBC. Welcome to all!

Did you hear about the four blondes that froze to death at the drive-in theater? They were waiting for the show "Closed for the Season" to start.

I can't resist putting in some pictures from the web page. On the web, most of these are in color. I'll leave it to you to decide if that's an advantage; with some of these, the less detail the better. And with that, I'll close another chapter in the annals of CFO history. I hope the next one comes sooner. I've had some offers of help on the newsletter, and I may just take up one or more of them in a few months to expedite the next newsletter publication.

Summer 1998



Rey Cluks

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